

Camping Trip by m11kewheeler

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Summary:

Hopper takes Eleven and the boys on a camping trip. Lucas and Dustin may or may not have a bet going on.

Camping Trip

The idea had originally been Will's. Even though things had been pretty normal for the past few months since Eleven's return, he still felt like he needed to get out of Hawkins for a couple days. They all did. The boys had always wanted to go on a camping trip, but had never actually gone around to planning one. And besides, none of the boys' parents wanted to be 'the only adult in charge of four rambunctious boys', as Mike's mom put it.

So the idea was put on hold until Will causally mentioned to Hopper that he had never been real-life camping before. Hopper, who had been a huge part of the Byers' family after the recent events, pat Will on the back and told the boys-and Eleven-to back their bags.

"What is 'camp-ing'?" Eleven asked after Will met the rest of the group at Mike's house.

Mike sat for a moment, trying to think of an answer that won't confuse her. "It's like when you go into the woods for a couple days and you bring tents and food and stuff."

"And you make s'mores," Dustin added.

"Is it safe?" Eleven asked.

"Yeah, it's totally safe," Mike said. "It's not like in the middle of the woods. There are, like, campgrounds and stuff. People go camping all the time."

"Plus Hopper said he'd take us so we'll definitely be safe," Will said, throwing a t-shirt into his duffel bag.

"Don't worry," Mike said, picking up on Eleven's nervousness. "It'll be fun."

Eleven nodded and gave him a soft smile. "Fun," she repeated.

The campsite was about an hour away from Hawkins. The second the car passed the 'Leaving Hawkins' sign, Mike let out a sigh of relief.

They all needed a break from their small town.

“We’re here!” Dustin cried, bouncing in his seat. Eleven smiled at his enthusiasm.

Hopper parked the car and they all got out. Dustin held the jumbo marshmallows to his chest. “I’ll be in charge of these,” he stated as the rest of them got the tents out of the trunk.

“Are you sure the five of you want to share a tent?” Hopper asked.

Mike nodded. “El wanted to stay will all of us.”

“Okay well...No funny business, alright?”

The boys wrinkled their eyebrows in confusion.

“Never mind,” Hopper shook his head.

After the two tents were set up, Hopper started a fire in the fire pit and began to roast some hot dogs for dinner.

“Have you ever had a hot dog, El?” Lucas asked, handing her a nicely charred one.

Eleven shook her head.

“It’s really good. Especially when it’s roasted over a fire,” he explained.

Eleven took a bite and grinned.

“Good, huh?” Mike laughed.

“Yeah,” she said after swallowing the bite.

“Just wait until you try the s’mores,” Dustin said dreamily.

“S’mores?”

“They’re the best thing you’ll ever taste.”

“They’re basically marshmallows and chocolate sandwiched between

two graham crackers,” Mike clarified.

“Okay,” El replied before taking another bite out of her hot dog.

“The closest I’ve ever gone to having real s’mores is making them over the stove,” Dustin said, already roasting his third marshmallow over the fire.

“Dude, slow down,” Lucas said. “You’re going to get sick.”

“I know my limits,” Dustin shouted with his mouth full. “Just let me enjoy this.”

“So how do you like it?” Mike turned to El and watched as she took her first bite of s’mores.

“Love it,” she said, her eyes widening in wonder.

“This stuff is the real deal,” he said, roasting his own marshmallow over the fire. “This is the only way to have real s’mores.”

Eleven smiled for what seemed like the thousandth time tonight. She did not want this night to end.

Hopper retired to his tent an hour later, followed shortly after by Dustin, Lucas, and Will. Mike began to stand up to join them when El grabbed his arm. “Stay?” She asked with hopeful eyes. Mike nodded and sat back down next to her.

She looked at the fire, which was slowly burning out. “Pretty.”

“Yeah. It’s nice,” Mike said.

Eleven began to shiver and Mike immediately took off his jacket and handed it to her.

“Here, El.”

She shook her head. “I’m okay.”

Without a word, he draped the jacket over her shoulders and the shivering subsided. “Thank you,” she whispered.

Subconsciously, Mike leaned closer to El, and without thinking, he quickly pressed his lips to hers. The second he pulled away, he heard a snicker from behind him followed by a ‘shhhh.’

“What the—” Mike turned around and saw Lucas and Dustin spying on them from behind a tree.

“You owe me a dollar,” Lucas said to Dustin.

Both Mike and El’s cheeks were burning. “Look, Mikey’s blushing,” Dustin teased.

“Shut up!” Mike yelled while Eleven stayed silent, trying to fight the smile on her lips. “Let’s just go to sleep.” He took El’s hand and walked to the tent. As they all settled in their sleeping bags, Mike could feel his friends staring at him.

“This has been a successful camping trip, huh Lucas?”

“Oh, you betcha, Dustin.”

Mike rolled his eyes.

They were never going to let him live this down.

(Not that he minded though. In fact, he smiled every time he thought of it).